

Awards

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his primary clinic responsibilities in Arco, the MacKay Clinic sometimes gets so busy that he sees more than 40 elderly patients per day, after which he makes house calls to those without access to the clinic.



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR

Lt. Joseph E. Tritchler, PA-C
Federal Correctional
Institution, Allenwood
Health Services Unit
White Deer, Pennsylvania

In recognition of personal excellence in providing health care services that set the standard.

Joseph Tritchler has become the "most sought-after health care provider" at the Federal Correctional Institution where he serves. In addition, Lt. Tritchler developed, implemented and now maintains a comprehensive infectious disease program, which includes screening and prevention for hepatitis, HIV and tuberculosis. Because he is such a popular clinician, Lt. Tritchler spends many of his off-duty hours with patients who have specifically requested his medical attention. His dedication to his patients' health extends even further into his personal time; he is pursuing a program of continuing medical education so that he can provide the most up-to-date care.

As evidence of his communication skills and dedication to his patients, Lt. Tritchler was selected to serve on the institution's hostage negotiation team. He has effectively negotiated non-confrontational resolutions on a number of occasions.

Lt. Tritchler has also taken on the mentorship, training and supervision of PA students assigned to the facility, and donates what remains of his spare time to the Boy Scouts of America.



NURSE PRACTITIONER OF THE YEAR

Frank T. Lang, NP
Western Sierra Medical Clinic
Downieville, California

In recognition of Mr. Lang's competence, skill, commitment and dedication as the sole clinician in a rural mountainous area of northern California. His leadership for the past 21 years reflects the highest traditions and values of the National Health Service Corps and the U.S. Public Health Service.

Mr. Lang's distinguished career with the NHSC includes a long list of accomplishments. As one of the original NHSC volunteers, Mr. Lang developed a highly successful Community Health Program and Medical and Dental Clinic, the only health care facility for 50 miles in any direction. In 1984, he garnered community support for the purchase and remodeling of the facility, a project that was recognized in the BPHC's 1992 Models That Work campaign.

Over the course of his career in northern California, Mr. Lang has given care through more than 80,000 patient appointments. He is also responsible for establishing a pharmacy system and programs in disaster relief, alcoholism and HIV.

In addition to providing direct patient care, Mr. Lang acted as a preceptor for the University of California at Davis School of Medicine and trained all emergency medical technicians in his area. He established a highly developed referral system with providers and institutions in adjacent communities for secondary and tertiary care.

Mr. Lang's community involvement includes work with the Community Blood Bank Program, the Boy Scouts, the Lions Club, and the development and operation of the Western Sierra Food Bank.



DENTIST OF THE YEAR

Travis R. Shearer, DDS
Panhandle Community
Services (PCS) Health Center
Gering, Nebraska

In recognition of the vital contributions Travis Shearer, DDS, has made to improve the dental health of minority and underserved populations of the Nebraska Panhandle.

Dr. Shearer, dental director of the PCS Health Center, spearheads a number of education and prevention initiatives in local communities. His particular attention to the dental needs of children reaps significant results, particularly in the reduction of baby bottle tooth decay occurrence over the last several years.

As highlighted in *In Touch*, Winter 1996, Dr. Shearer organized a major education initiative on proper oral hygiene instruction and tooth care for infants and young children. The initiative included his attending PCS Health Center support groups and Head Start Centers to directly instruct parents and children.

Dr. Shearer also supports community outreach programs. For example, from April to August, his clinic offers evening dental services to accommodate migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families who are unable to leave the field during the day. In addition, the PCS Health Center is the only local practice that accepts Medicaid clients without limitation.

Dr. Shearer is also a vocal proponent for water fluoridation in his community. He devotes much of his personal time to city, county and town hall meetings, testifying on the positive effects of fluoride in the water supply and calling attention to potential reductions in tax dollars spent on dental care. Thanks to Dr. Shearer's efforts, two Panhandle communities have voted to fluoridate their water systems.